PRESS RELEASE

Fight Begins to Save The Garden of Eden

Sometime before January 31, 1985, New York City's Housing Authority plans to demolish <u>The Garden of Eden</u> in order to construct a low-income housing project.

The Garden of Eden is an internationally recognised earthwork created by one man, Adam Purple (505-8313), during the last ten years. The garden is located on Elridge Street between Stanton Street and Rivington Street in the Lower East Side. The garden has been the only hope is this abandoned and demolished section of Manhattan.

Efforts to save the garden are beginning on two fronts. The Storefront for Art and Architecture will sponsor an international exhibition of alternative designs to the current Housing Authority plans. (Richard Rosenthal, Director of Design of H.A., 306-3486) For three years, the citizens of New York have been led to beleive that the garden and the housing could not co-exist on the same site. Recent specific architectural plans (James Mc Cullar, Architect 696-5250) accepted by the Housing Authority can be easily alterred to preserve the garden. STOREFRONT has provided one possible revision to the City and will present at least 30 more through an exhibition at STOREFRONT openning September 13, 1984 (Glenn Weiss 431-5795)

The second effort will be conducted in the courts by a group of lawyers associated with Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. (William Candiloros, Christopher Kirkland, Edward Tuozzo, 532-1226, 273-2066, 494-0315)

Finally, assistance is being provided by National Geographic. National Geographic will recognise Adam Purple's achievement with full page photographs in their September 1984 issue.

Testimony

..."the man who calls himself Adam Purple. He's without doubt New York City's most famous eccentric easily spottable in his long white hair and beard, dressed always in purple down to his sneakers and up to his purple-tinted mirrored sunglasses. A treasure of individuality."

Howard Smith & Lin Harris, Village Voice, October 21, 1981

"Down in the heart of the immigrant ghetto, the Purple People's garden blooms like a brushfire."

Norman Green, New York Magazine, August 27, 1979

"Adam Purple's 'Garden of Eden' on Elridge Street, on New York's historical and almost abandoned lower east side, is a work of art. It should be preserved, not made a monument, in absentia, to planning stupidity. It is particularly valuable because it is a work of art that functions on three levels: environmental, esthetic and social. It is a work of reclamation, amazing and magical to come upon in that devastated neighborhood; that's how I first saw it, as a complete surprise. And it is an impressive stone sculpture, its graceful arcs giving permanent order to the organic chaos of growing things. It is an urban "earthwork", in the tradition of the great Japanese and European gardens, and all the more important because it was done by an artist, independently, without patronage, from love of the place.

"Here, if anywhere, form and content are combined in a way that can satisfy both individual and community needs and longings for beauty amid ugliness. There are many for more costly and vaunted works of so-called public art in New York City that should be razed before the 'Garden of Eden'. Must we keep making these mistakes?"

Lucy Lippard, October 13, 1982 Author of 13 books on contemporary art

51 Prince Street, New York, NY 10012 Wed-Sun: II-7 (212)431-5795 STOREFRONT FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Past Misconception

The following statements demonstrate the prevelent misconception that The Garden of Eden and the housing project can not co-exist. The statements were made before the City had completed its first set of architectural plans.

"He (Val Coleman, Housing Authority spokesman) says the garden could not have been included in the project. 'It's a limited site,' he says, 'and we wanted to have as many units as possible within the present low-rise policy for family housing."

The New York Times, September 4, 1983

"All the neighborhood groups like Mr. Purple. I like him and appreciate what he's done. However, we can't sacrifice what we all worked so hard to get for a garden, no matter how beautiful."

Miriam Friedlander, City Councilwoman Vilage Voice, October 21, 1981

New Conceptions

STOREFRONT has invited over 70 architects from 23 countries to redesign the low-income housing project while preserving Adam Purple's The Garden of Eden. These inspirational designs of both humanistic and practical character will be presented to the City through an exhibition at STOREFRONT, September 13 - October 7, 1984.

To demonstrate the possibility of preserving the garden with the housing before the exhibition opens, STOKEFRONT's architectural staff has prepared a new site plan. This plan is a simple alteration of the City's current design and preserves the garden and 53 Stanton Street, an occupied building which has already won its fight for survival.

STOREFRONT's Architectural Proposal

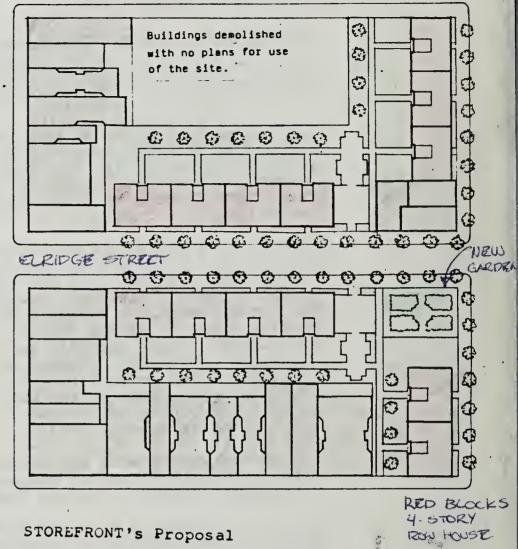
Advantages:

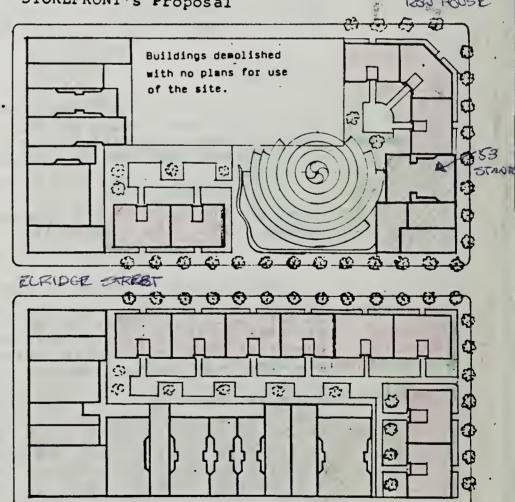
- 1. Preserve The Garden of Eden
- 2. Save 53 Stanton Street
- 3. Playgrounds move to backyards where they are both communal and private. Parents will be able to watch their children play from inside their apartments.
- 4. A cost saving will result when the 20,000 square feet under the garden and 53 Stanton Street are removed from the construction contract.

Design Alterations and Construction Schedule:

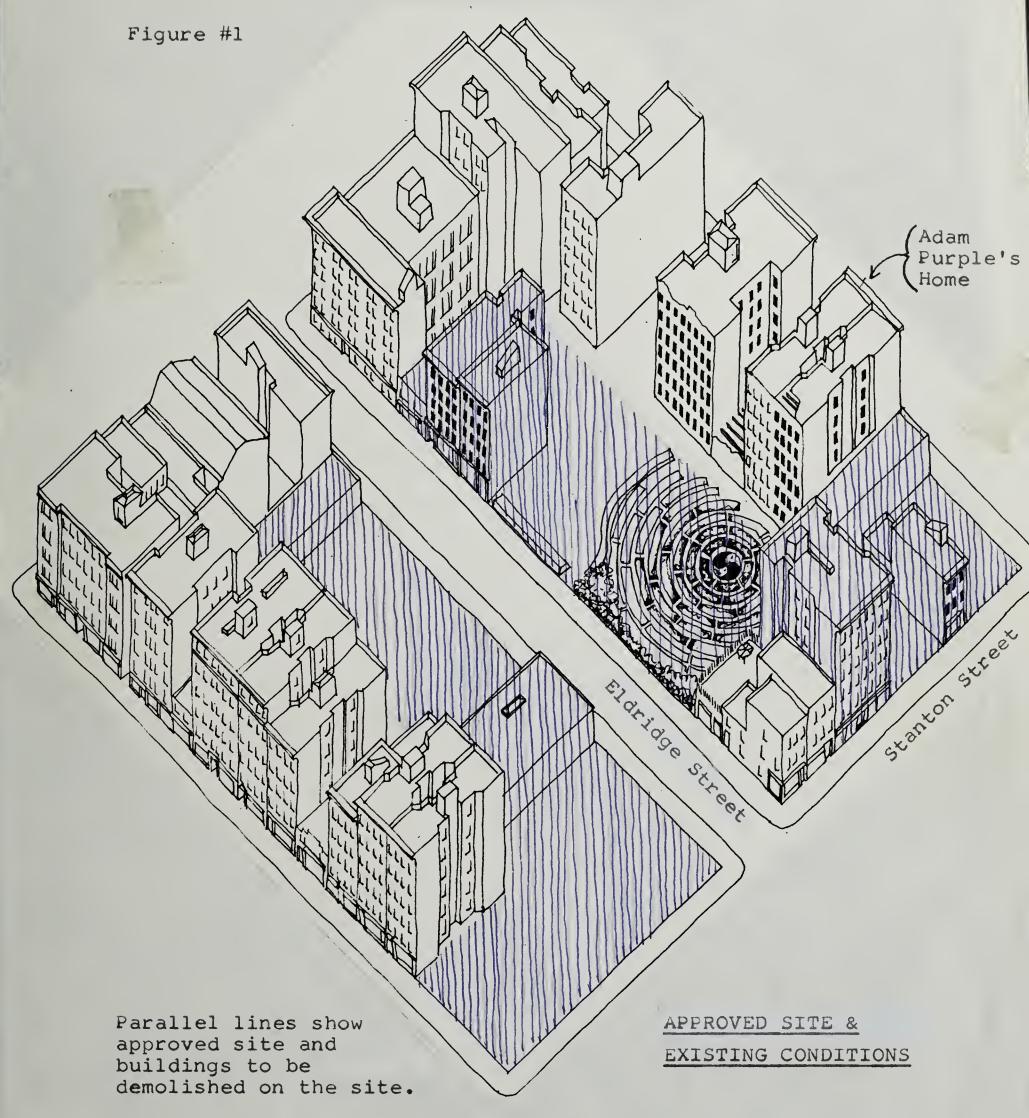
1. All public agencies from the Community
Board to the Board of Estimate approve
only the type of use (low-income housing),
the number of units (108), the building
type (low-rise), and the site to be
developed. The specific architectural
plans, in this case, were never seen by
any group except the Housing Authority
and H.U.D. when approval was granted.
Therefore, as long as the approved criteria
is followed, the specific plans can be
alterred without a review process. A
change to save the garden, like the change
to save 53 Stanton Street, will not delay
the project schedule.

HOUSING AUTHORITY Proposal Before Alteration to save 53 Stanton Street



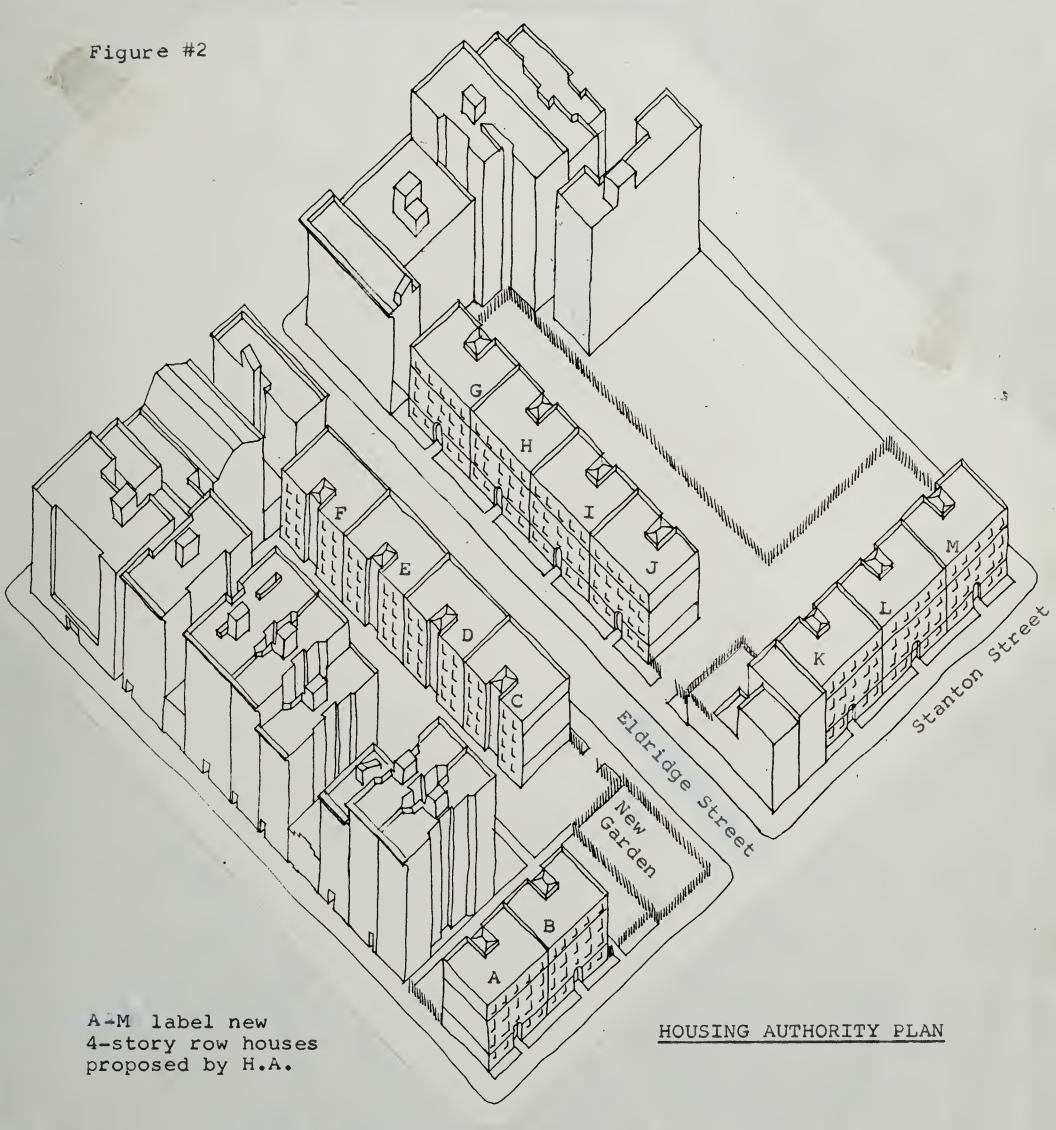


2. STOREFRONT's simple manipulation of existing plans calls for the creation of only one new building type at the corner of Forsyth Street and Stanton Street. This diagonal building type is already under construction in a new Housing Authority project one block away at the corner of Stanton Street and Bowery.

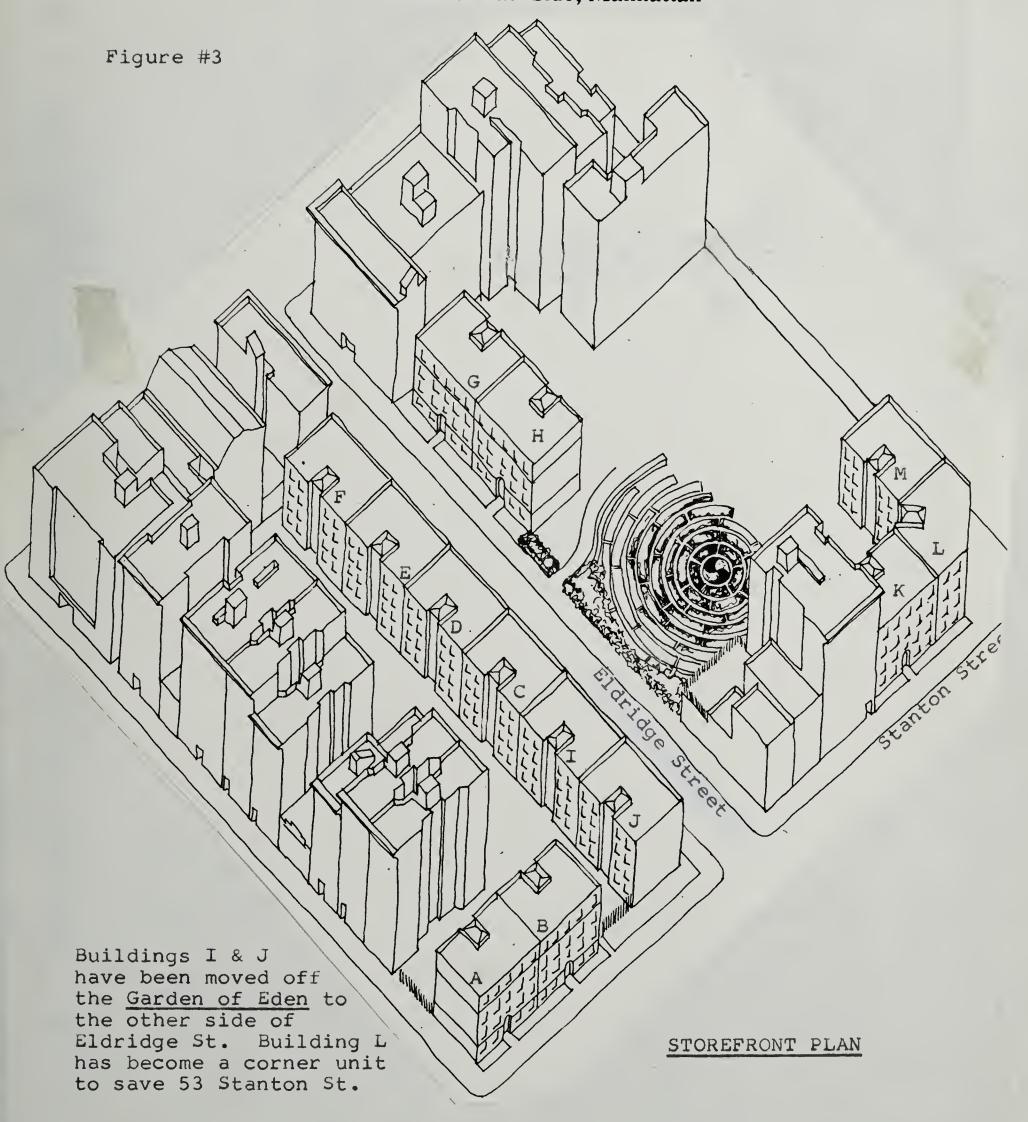


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STOREFRONT's architectural staff has proposed an alternative design which preserves the garden and 53 Stanton Street. (STOREFRONT opens an exhibition on September 13 of other alternative designs by 25 architects) The design accepts the H.A. system of 4-story row houses and merely moves two row houses from The Garden of Eden to the location of a proposed new garden across the street. (Fig. #3)

In the past all concerned parties have acted responsibly upon the information provided. With the new information, we should act responsibly again. The garden is an unquestionable treasure which will enhance both the housing project and the quality of life for all of us in New York. We hope you will grasp the opportunity of the moment and support an unified vision of garden and housing.

STOREFRONT would like to speak with you in more detail regarding the entire situation. If your examination of the situation draws the same conclusions as our own, we hope you can participate in a press conference to announce the vision of a unified housing and garden.

Thank you for considering this matter.

Sincerely,

Kyong Park
Glenn Weiss
Directors of Storefront for Art and Architecture

cc. Pete Granis Richard Rosenthal, Director of Design for H.A.

August 13, 1984

Joseph J. Christian, Chairman Walter S. Fried, Member Blanca G. Cedeno, Member John Simon, General Manager Norman Parnass, Secretary New York City Housing Authority 250 Broadway New York, NY 10007

Re: Lower East Side Project I and The Garden of Eden

Dear N.Y.C. Housing Authority,

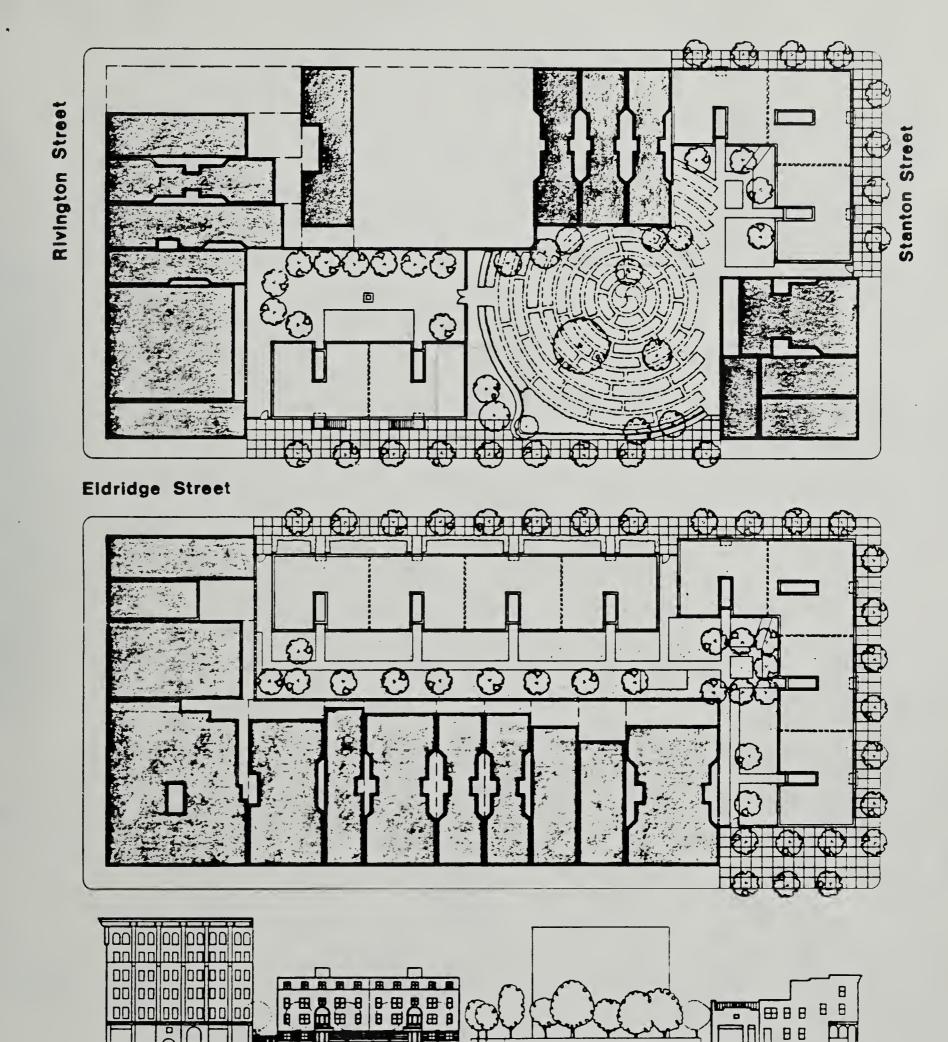
The Storefront for Art and Architecture requests that NYCHA during its 50th birthday celebration accept a gift: The Garden of Eden by Adam Purple. Please instruct the turnkey developer and his architect on Lower East Side Project I to redesign the site plan to preserve this existing public garden and work of art within the housing project.

As you aware, The Garden of Eden will again be recognised as a national treasure through full page photographs in the September issue of National Geographic Magazine. Both the NY Department of Cultural Affairs and eminate NY art critic, Lucy Lippard, have identified the garden as a "work of public art". The NY Horticultural Society has praised the splendors of the garden through its magazine, Garden -"one of the most imaginative and productive ornamental gardens in the City."

A housing project which incorporates The Garden of Eden would undoubtably add to the quality of life of the future residents.

For the last few years, an unfortunate debate has occurred in which the community was asked to choose between the low-income housing project and The Garden of Eden. As responsible citizens, the community has supported the housing in this either-or choice.

Now, with the acceptance of a developer's turnkey proposal, the situation has changed. The developer's plan includes enough leftover open space to provide a new community garden across the street. (See Fig. #2) STOREFRONT's architectural staff has proposed a modification of the developer's skeme which simply swaps the new garden for The Garden of Eden. (See Fig. #3) According to James McCullar, the architect, and Richard Rosenthal, Director of Design, the skeme is realistic and practical. No time delays would occur if a similiar plan to STOREFRONT's plan were accepted since there is no change in the approved site designation.

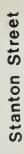


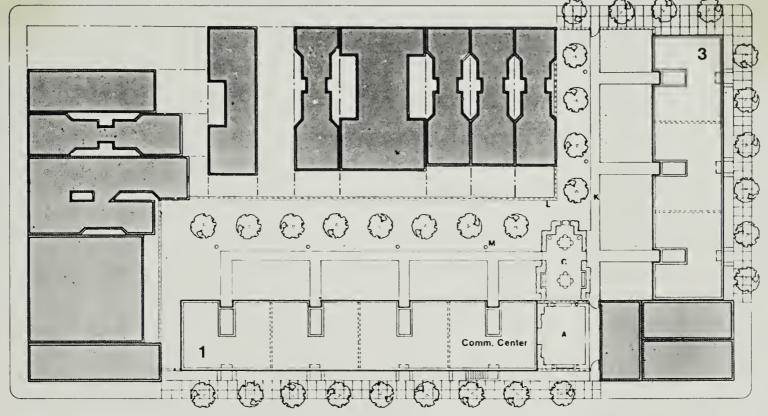
JAMES MCCULLAR ASSOCIATES

New Skeme now under consideration by Housing Authority





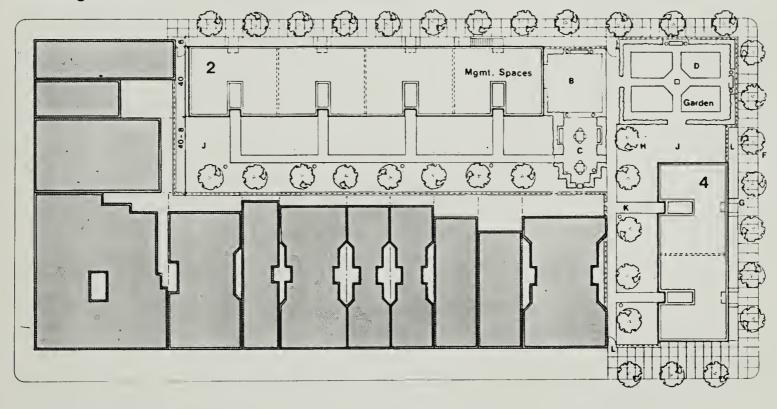




Eldridge Street

Street

Rivington





ADAM'S HOUSE IN PARADISE

Lower East Side, Manhattan





August 3, 1984

N.Y.S.C.A. Jeannette Bamford Paul Buck Patricia Conway Susan Jean Cummings Peter Flynn Jean France Ghislaine Hermanuz Stewart Johnson William Johnston Michael Kwartler Carl Stearns Miriam Trementozzi Pablo Vengoechea

Dear Advisory Panel for APD,

The Garden of Eden in the Lower East Side of Manhattan needs your help quickly. This ten year old garden created by Adam Purple will be demolished to construct a lower income housing project by NYC Housing Authority. Demolition will occur sometime after October unless media attention is focused on the garden and politicians are persuaded to ask Housing Authority to change its plans.

I have enclosed STOREFRONT'S architectural solution to save the garden within the housing project. Our solution is a simple manipulation of the existing plan by architect, James McCullar. So much space was available upon the approved site that H.A. plans to build a new garden across the street from Adam Purple's garden. STOREFRONT merely moved two 4-story row houses off the Garden of Eden and on H.A. garden. Recently, an existing apartment building on the site was saved. To preserve 53 Stanton Street, STOREFRONT created a new corner row house at Stanton and Forsyth. According to Mr. McCullar and Richard Rosenthal, Director of Design for H.A., our plan is a very real alternative with little loss of time or increase in cost.

STOREFRONT has assisted Adam in all ways possible from the architectural exhibition to the legal battle lost in court today. Most fruitful efforts have been in meetings with Assemblyman Pete Granis. Chairman of Committee on Housing, and with Downtown press like the Village Voice. Please write and call any media and political individuals who can help save the garden.

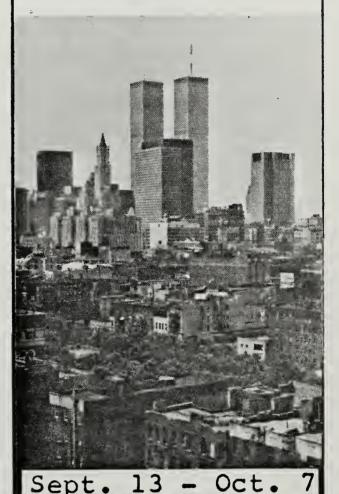
Urban spaces rarely grow in such a manner and quality. Help create a better housing project and city. Thank you and call if you have any questions.

Glenn Weiss Kyong Park Directors of STOREFRONT

ADAM'S HOUSE IN PARADISE Lower East Side, Manhattan

In a town of square pegs, There is a round hole called The Garden of Eden, an oasis in the rubble of the Lower East Side. Built on abandoned property over the last 10 years by Adam Purple, this public garden now faces demolition due to the proposed construction of a low income housing project by N.Y.C.H.A. The following architects will exhibit new designs to save the garden within the housing project.

Lebbeus Woods James Wines Walczek/Standing Scofidio/Diller Bart Prince Mary Pepchinski Eric Owen Moss Morphosis David Mohney Demetrius Manouselis James McCullar Assoc. Bill Lane Uttam Jain Furniture Club Neil Denari David Devaleria Dan Coma Bausman/Gill Batey/Mack Anderson/Wheelwright





Reception: Sept. 13, 6-9 PM

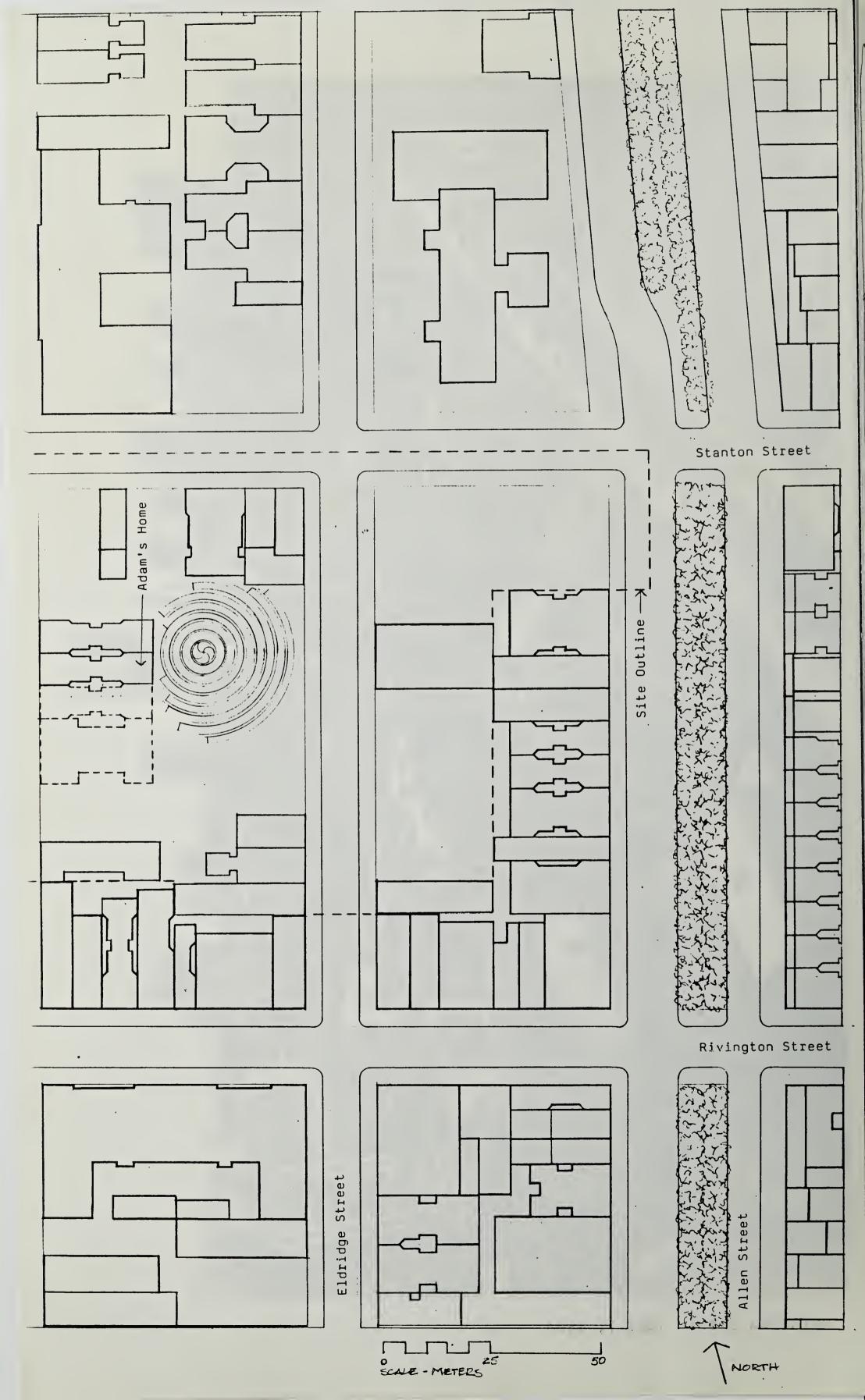
Kyong Park Glenn Weiss

STOREFRONT

51 Prince, NYC



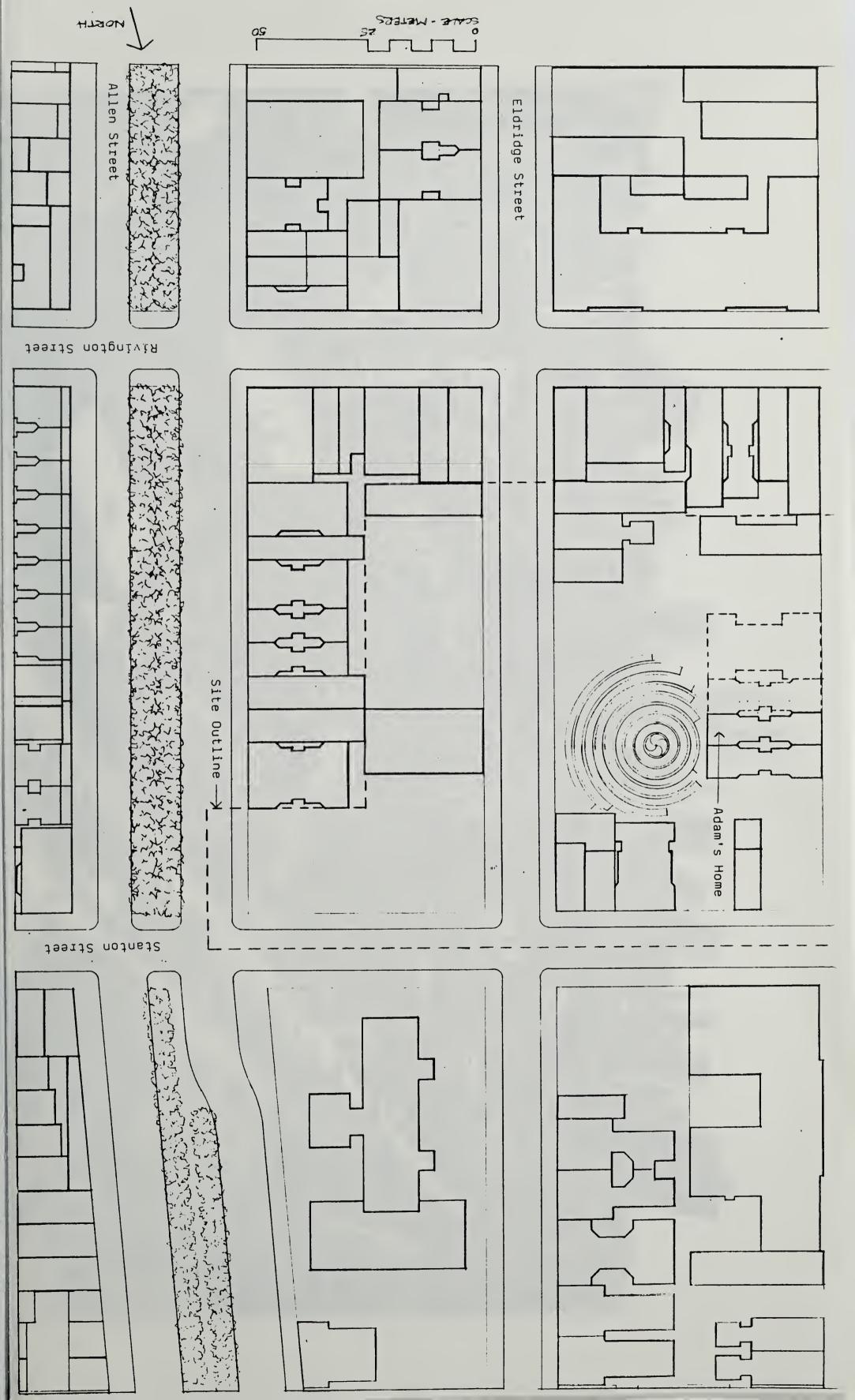
EXISTING SITE: JULY 7, 1984



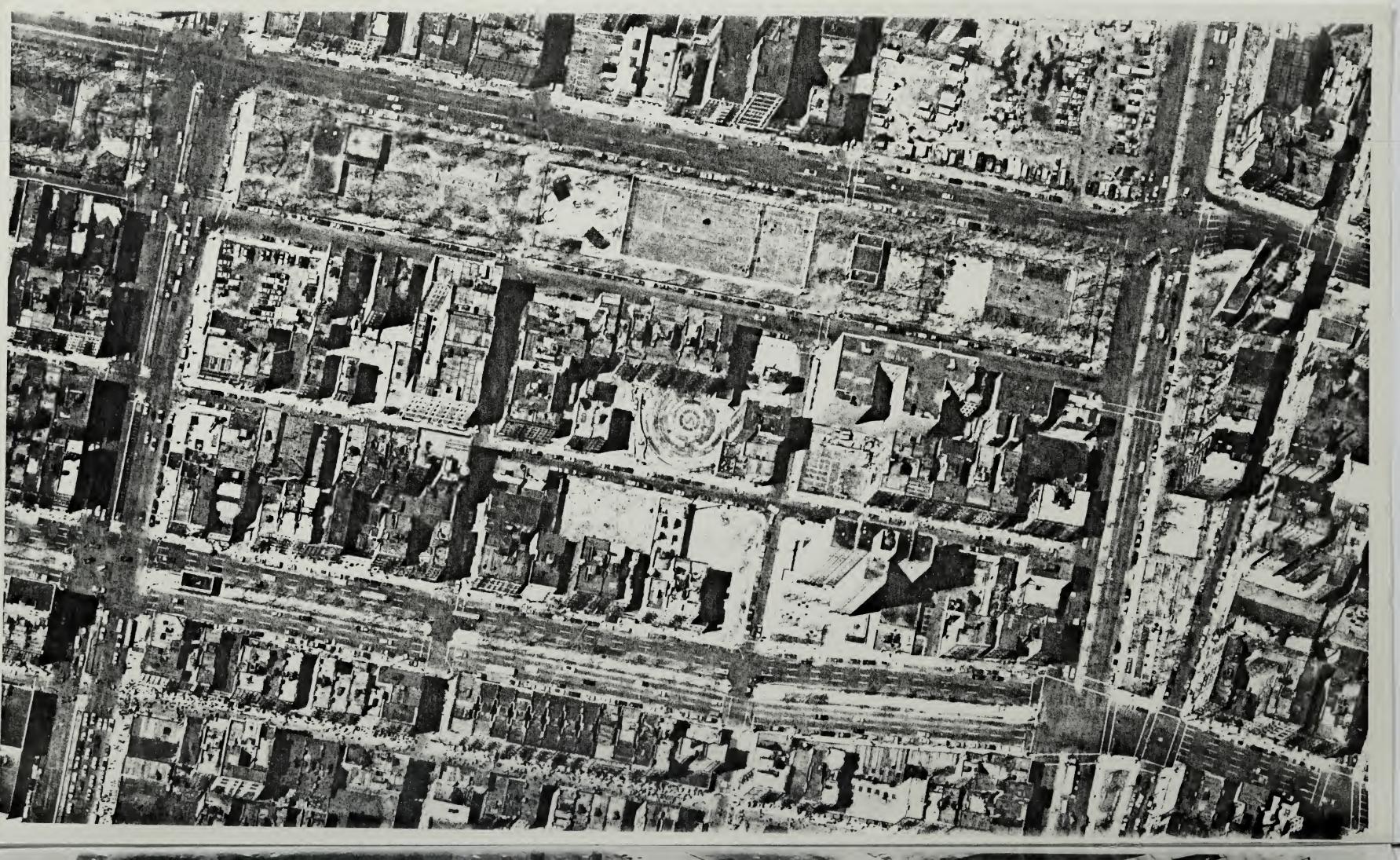
















THE GARDEN OF EDEN

History

'72 - Adam Purple rents apartment behind future garden site

'74 - Adam begins construction of garden on two vacant lots behind his home

'76 - Landlord abandons Adam's apartment building

'78 - Other occupied buildings on garden site are demolished by N.Y.C.

'79 - Federal agency (HUD) reserves money for low-income housing on the site of the garden

'80 - Adam is only remaining resident in the center of the block

'82 - May -N.Y.C. Housing Authority seeks developers to design and construct the housing

Sept-Community Board #3 approves housing project. Community board is led to believe that the garden and the housing are mutually exclusive

'83 - N.Y.C. Board of Estimate, highest city governing body, approves the housing project

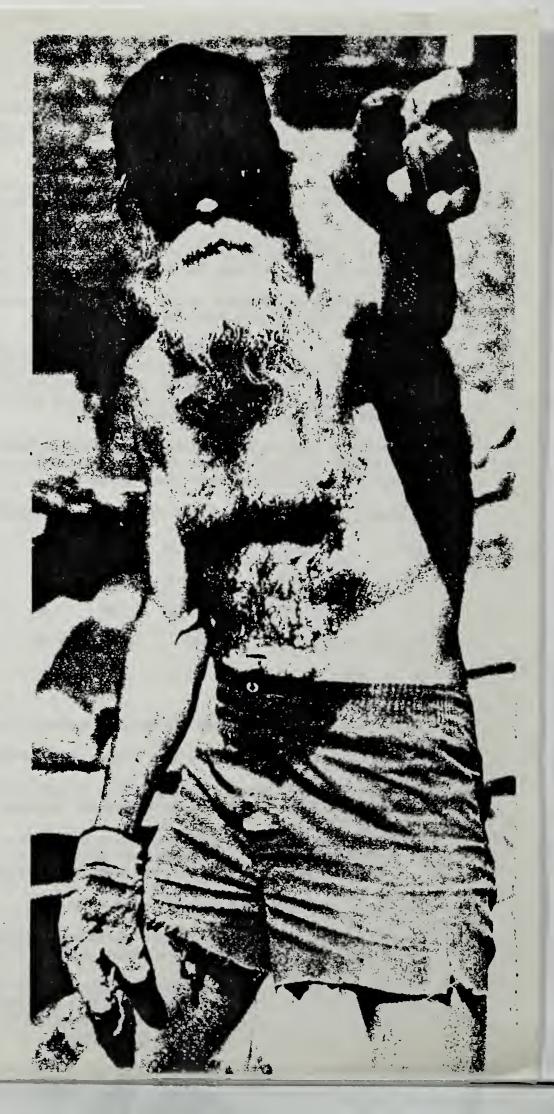
'84 - Feb -Plans by developer accepted by
Housing Authority
June-Community Board #3 rejects

saving the garden
July-Demolition of buildings behind
garden begins

'85 - Jan -Last month for Housing Authority to begin construction or lose federal money

Media Coverage 1980-84

Television: All local stations during news programs ABC National TV "Ripley's Believe it 183 or Not" NBC National TV "Real People" 182 West German National TV: ZDF 180 Japanese National TV: Fuji '81 Italian National TV 182 Magazines: USA - "National Geographic" Sept. '84 "New York Magazine" West Germany - "Stern" "Panorama" Switzerland - "Swissotel" Newspapers: All local newspapers



DESIGN CRITERIA OF HOUSING AUTHORITY (edited)

- 1. Number of Apartments. The number of apartments should not exceed 135 consisting of approximately 25% one-bedroom, 50% two-bedroom, and 25% three-bedroom apartments. Five percent of the units should be designed and equipped for the physically handicapped.
- 2. Building Type. All residential buildings shall be walk-ups of not over four stories. Each building shall have not more than four units per floor per entry. Apartments on the third and fourth floors shall be duplexes entered on the third floor. All buildings are to be of fire resistant, non-combustible construction. (New York City building code requires two means of egress for each apartment and elevators must be provided for buildings over four stories high)

Graffiti resistant finishes shall be used on the exterior of the first story and in all lobbies, corridors and public spaces.

3. <u>Circulation</u>. The line of travel from the public sidewalk through the entry and lobby to vertical circulation should be clearly visible from the starting point and well illuminated. The number of entry points to each building should be minimized. Entry from recreational open space and parking areas shall be to the same lobby as entry from the sidewalk.

All parts of the project, interior and exterior, where tenants normally have access shall be readily accessible by a person in a wheelchair without assistance, except for walk-up apartments above grade level.

4. Apartment Design. Minimum room sizes for new construction in square feet

#BR	LR & K/D	LR/D & K	MBR	BR	#Bath
1	160 & 120	210 & K	135	115	1
2	160 & 120	210 & K	135	115	1
3	170 & 140	230 & K	135	115	1½
4	180 & 160	250 & K	135	115	2
Minimu	m Dimension	11'-0"	9'-4"	9'-2"	

BR - Bedroom

LR - Living Room

D - Dining Area

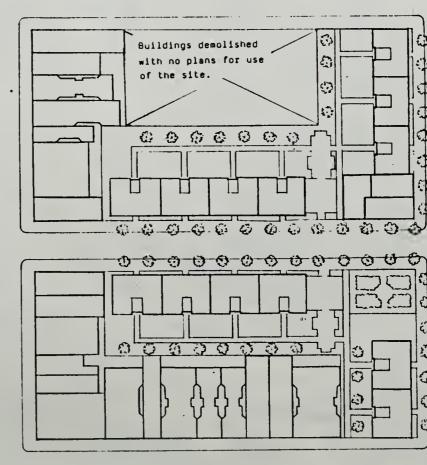
K - Kitchen (Space enough for kitchen equipment and counter)

MBR - Master Bedroom

Bath- Bathroom ("2" Bath has only tiolet and lavatory)

- 5. Management and Maintenance Spaces. This project will be operated from another project nearby. However, the following are required within the building.
 - A. Maintenance Storage 800 square feet in cellar with locker room and toilet
 - B. Management Office 150 square feet with toilet
 - C. Tenant's Patrol Room 150 square feet with toilet
- 6. Laundry Room. Space for 3 washers and 2 dryers
- 7. <u>Building Security</u>. Security window guards (collapsable metal grates) at accessible locations and child safety window guards for 50% of the units.
- 8. Communal Facilities. A multi-purpose room suitable for meetings, dining, social gathering and audio-visual presentation with adjacent kitchen, toilets, storage space and closets. Approximately 1,300 square feet. Public as well as tenant access to the communal facilities is required.

- 8. Mechanical Equipment.
 - A. Heating Independent gas-fired hot water heating systems and separate gas fired domestic hot water heaters for each building.
 - B. Space for Electric, Gas and Telephone equipment
 - C. Air Conditioning Sleeves for tenant installed, through-the-wall air-conditioning units in the living rooms and master bedrooms.
- 9. Refuse Removal. Refuse removal must be planned to meet tenant needs while requiring a minimum of service personel to function. Small building of less than 10 units may use sidewalk garbage cans, but larger buildings must have garbage chutes and collection points.
- 10. Landscaping and Site Security. All open space shall be secure and appropriately landscaped. The design shall maximize the sunlight falling on the open space. At least fifty percent of the open shall be planted, or developed and equipped for recreational use. Maximum visibility shall be insured from dwelling units to the street and to the on-site open space.
 - A. Play area adequate to serve the anticipated child population.
 - B. Sitting areas for 10% of the population and shall receive sunlight.
 - C. Street trees a minimum of 30 feet on center.
 - D. Six feet steel bar fencing enclosing entire site except where buildings are close to lot lines, providing a secure perimeter. All property lines to be fenced.
 - E. All portions of the site not developed for specific uses should be fully landscaped with trees, shrubs, ground cover, and/or grass.
 - F. All buildings shall have direct access to a secure open recreation area from the entrance lobby or otherwise accessible to all tenants.
 - G. Provision must be made for privacy in ground floor apartments by such means as screen planting, fencing, private terraces or raised windows and floor levels.



City housing proposal as of June 15, 1984



INVITATION

In the Lower East Side of Manhattan, Adam Purple built The Garden of Eden -- hope in a territory of poverty and drugs. For the last 10 years, he squatted and maintained a city block that the owners and the City had abandoned. While the City of New York demolished the rotting tenements one by one, Adam Purple constructed a public garden from the fallen debris of bricks and lintels. The result is an ever expanding earthwork of concentric rings; an oasis of flowers, vegetables, and birds; a vernacular architecture in the heart of metropolis; a gift of personal labor to the urban community.

The City of New York plans to construct a public housing project on a site that includes <u>The Garden of Eden</u>. This project will provide permanent homes to a local community suffering from substandard dwellings, minimal community services, and eviction due to the economic prosperity of others. Although, the City of New York is converting Manhattan into a treasure map for the rich, this housing project comes as a symbol of political and moral health.

Since the project's conception, however, the City has ignored The Garden of Eden. The City maintains a strict policy that all community and squatters' gardens are temporary uses of abandoned property before "development," rather than public spaces with physical and social benefits for the neighborhood. If present plans hold, this beaurocratic policy will lead to the demolition of Adam Purple's creation by January 1985.

STOREFRONT invites the following architects to take an action that alters the future. Each architect is requested to propose a new design for the coexistence of the housing and the garden. The proposals can be spirited sketches or extensive designs. The proposals will be exhibited at STOREFRONT from September 13 to October 6. The exhibition catalogue will fully document each architect's solution. STOREFRONT intends for the exhibition and its comprehensive catalogue to enlighten the City of New York to the various solutions generated by this unique opportunity. Finally these architects will be honoring the social and creative force of Adam Purple's The Garden of Eden and supporting the concern for public housing through the individual and collective strength of their architecture.

51 Prince Street, New York, NY 10012 Wed-Sun: II-7 (212)431-5795 STOREFRONT FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE Aldo van Eyck

B.V. Doshi

Atelier 5

Aldo Rossi

Zaha Hadid

Harry Wolf

John Hejduk

Jorn Utzon

Rafael Moneo

Moshe Safdie

Arata Isozaki

Imre Makovecz

Charles Correa

Peter Wilson

Morphosis

Team Zoo

Eric Moss

O.M. Ungers

Mario Botta

Bart Prince

Franco Purini

Vittorio Gregotti

Gill Bausman Pompeii

Bernard Tschumi

Paolo Portoghesi

Twitchell & Miao

Reima Pietila

David Mahoney

Erik Asmussen

Lucien Kroll

Uttman Jain

Herman Hertzberger

Tsien & Williams

Kenneth Frampton

Batey & Mack

Ralph Erskine

Oscar Niemeyer

Christopher Alexander

Combine the design criteria of the Housing Authority with the design criteria of Adam Purple.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Exhibition: One presentation board of square format which does not exceed 30" x 30" (77cm x 77cm)

Catalogue: 1) One 8" x 8" (20.5cm x 20.5cm), black and white, continuous tone, photographic print

of all or part of the presentation 2) Photograph of architect(s)

3) A typed statement, not more than 100 words

4) A title of the work

Donation: Optional. A \$50.00 donation to help fund the exhibition. Checks should be made payable to the Cultural Foundation for the Storefront for

Art and Architecture.

SCHEDULE

July 31 Inform STOREFRONT of your intention to participate

Sept 1 Submissions due at STOREFRONT

Sept 13 Opening of exhibition jointly at STOREFRONT and

at The Garden of Eden

Oct 6 Exhibition closes

OCt 20 Originals and catalogue mailed to participants

MAILING AND INFORMATION ADDRESS:

Kyong Park / Glenn Weiss Storefront for Art and Architecture 51 Prince Street, New York, NY 10012 Telephone: 212-431-5795

IF TIME CONSTRAINTS MAKES YOUR PARTICIPATION IMPOSSIBLE, PLEASE PASS THE PACKAGE ALONG TO ANOTHOR APUBLIFUT WHOSE WORK YOU PEOPLET.

PLANNING PRINCIPLE OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Theoretically, <u>The Garden of Eden</u> should grow to encompass one-half of the earth with alternating concentric rings of footpaths and plantings. (Footpaths - 2'-0" or 0.61 meters wide. Plantings-5'-6" or 1.61 meters wide.) The rings of plantings are sub-divided in equal segments. The number of segments in each ring is one greater than the previous ring. (1st ring - 5 segments; 2nd ring - 6 segments; 3rd ring - 7 segments, etc.) Practically, Adam Purple accepts limitations upon the form's expansion as demonstrated through existing encounters with buildings and roads.

The following paragraphs are adapted from a 20 February 1982 application to the New York City Departme(a)nt of Cultural Affairs by Adam Purple in response to Item 4 of its APPLICATION FOR ARTIST CERTIFICATION: "Describe your particular art form and tell us why a large space is imperative for its creation."

FINE ART DISCIPLINE -- THE GARDEN OF EDEN

4. ART FORM DESCRIPTION (including imperative for space) The Garden of Eden (a dynamic organic sculpture on Eldridge Street in Manhattan's Block 421, Lower East Side) may be described partly as a non-linear, minimumtechnology, urban agricultural art-project designed to demonstrate how abandoned-bulldozed lots (in even the most "depressed" ghetto) can be converted into an abundantly fruitful and beautiful open-space without necessitating any government or private funding. Started officially in 21 OMarch 1975 (with some 18 months' previous preparatory landscaping), The Garden is conceived as ultimately expanding through contiguous area to a "Great Circle" hemispheric sculpture (obviously visible to an orbiting satellite or to advanced intragalactic observation). Consequently, its aesthetic orientation continues to be as a non-verbal "teaching-machine" alternative to the unwise, uncritical, unhealthy, and unchecked exploitation of the Earth's surface, etc., in/by the planet's Qccidental half even though such continued exponential exploitation risks species extinction.

Hopefully, The Garden provides an zenvironmentally sane transcendent variation on the theme of the movie Colossus: The Forbin Project, "There is another system." For example, The Garden's expansion has already answered the question: "What minimum number of tenement-size lots needs to be 'greened' to achieve the return of such songbirds as finches, thrushes, etc.?" Answer: "Three." It was discovered simultaneously that one person could "green"

one lot per year by hand (and bicycle!).

On the basis that Mother Nature takes 500 years to create one inch of topsoil, The Garden of Eden represents artistically 2000 to 3000 years of r(apid) evolution.

FOOTNOTE (added 22 Feluary 1982): "Good government consists of winning the loyalty of the people nearby and attracting the people far away."

-- Confucius (from The Great Quotations, edited by George Seldes, Lyle Stuart, New York: 1966, p. 174). Certainly, The Garden qualifies as an Eart) (work.

(P.S. 23 Feluary 1982: Adam was prevented from completely delivering this statement at "Community" Board #3's regular February meeting on this date by hecklers and Board Acting Chairman-and HPD employee--Richard Ropiak.)

Lebbeus Woods Frank Gehry Ian Athfield Hans Hollein Shin Takamatsu Baudizzone, Diaz, Erbin Lestard, Varas Alvaro Siza Giorgio Grassi Osama Ishiyama James Wines Mary Pepchinski Piet Blom Alison & Peter Smithson Studio G.R.A.U. Kijo Rokkaku Richard Plunz David DeValeria Peter Cook Clorinda Testa Rem Koolhaas Tovo Ito Steven Holl Hassan Fathy Oriol Bohigas Itsuko Haseqawa Serge Chermayeff Dan Coma Oskar Hansen Leon Krier Giancarlo De Carlo Michael Kagan Herbert Greene Victoria Casasco Hiroshi Hara Rob Krier Zvi Hecker

By Adam Purple, 1982